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## What is Digital Storytelling?

Digital stories (DS) are based on personal experiences and told through the first person's perspective. DS combines narration, images, sound, video, and technology to create a short movie. The movies are created using free multimedia tools and can be viewed on CD, DVD, or on the internet. DS enables participants to develop their own media messages for health or wellness that is relevant to their community.



### *What computer skills do I need?*

Only basic PC knowledge. This workshop is designed for all levels of computer skills. We will assist you in the process of putting your story together. Through this experience you will learn the basics of script development, digital imagery and video editing. You can view some examples of digital storytelling at:

- <http://www.akchap.org/html/resources/cancer-education/cancer-movies/digital-stories.html>
- <http://www.creativenarrations.net>
- <http://www.andigitalstories.com/>

Please watch a couple of digital stories prior to the training.

### *How Is It Taught?*

DS is taught in a 2-4 day workshop that covers storytelling, script writing, video editing and image editing to produce a short 2-3 minute video. The participant's story is recorded in their voice and combined with their photographs, images, and home videos. The length of the workshop is dependent on the topic and type of training requested.

### *Who Is It For?*

For anyone. No prior computer or storytelling skills needed. Digital storytelling provides a respectful way for people to tell their stories, in their own voice, using multimedia tools.

## What is a Story?

Stories are defined as a narrative or tale of true or made-up events, but stories are so much more. Stories are a way to communicate, entertain, share knowledge and pass-on traditions. Stories share heartfelt knowledge that invites shifts in knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behavior (Cueva, 2006). Using story with multimedia technology forms a perfect blend of storytelling and technology, to create new traditions and to share knowledge.

A story is not just a straight line that takes you from Point A to Point B.



Think of a story as an arc, with a beginning, middle, and end. It moves along with a life of its own. Most stories are driven by a question that is very important to the author. The process of telling a story is a response to that question.



A story usually has:

**A beginning:** your job is to set up the story, to give the viewer a sense of what your story is about and why it's important. You might pose a question or present a problem that will be explored throughout the story. Many stories begin, "I used to..." We know that this story will reveal what is different now.

**A middle:** where your story unfolds. You might give some background, discuss your struggle with this problem or question, and share why you think it is important. This is usually where conflict or tension happens.

**An end:** your story does not need to resolve or answer the problem/issue. You can leave the viewer asking him/herself about the issue. However, you do want to somehow connect the ending with your beginning.

## What Are Successful Elements of Digital Storytelling?

Like all good stories, DS has a beginning, middle and an end and flows from one section to another. The story you share should directly relate to you and speaks from your heart. If it doesn't mean anything to you, it will not mean anything to your audience. Consider this:

- **What is the point of your story?** This is your point of view, your purpose; it is your chance to convey a message from you. Why are you telling this story? Digital stories are only a few minutes long so your message needs to be focused and clear, and come from your heart.
- **Is your “voice” in the story?** Does your story sound like it is you or does it sound like an announcer? Use your own language. Let your voice carry the story. That's what makes DS special. We write the story to practice and record it, but write the way you talk.
- **Who is your audience?** Do you have a specific audience in mind? What do you want people to get out of the story? Is there something you want your audience to feel, think, and do differently after they see your story? The more specific your audience is, the more effective your story will be.
- **Music - what does your soundtrack say about your movie?** The music you choose can set the tone and mood of your story. Consider it carefully. Music without lyrics often works best.
- **What do you see?** Use images, pictures, from your own life, consider color, tone; does it complement what you are saying? Consider symbols, your own artwork, your own drawings, etc. What kind of mood are you trying to create?
- **Be brief. Do you have a short movie or an extravaganza?** Remember, this is not Star Wars or a full-length documentary. *Digital Stories are short - keep it focused and to the point.* Think about what you can say with images rather than words.
- **Is there tension in your story?** All stories are ultimately about change. Without tension, without problems, there is no change. What changed in your story? Why?
- **Pacing** is essential; keep the story moving along.



(This bulleted section adapted from the Center for Digital Storytelling.)

## Focusing your Story

*Keep It Short and Simple.* The more you can focus your story, the better it will be. It's not about how many words are used, but what words are used; try to say parts of the story with images instead of words. The more specific and personal you can make the story be, the better the story will be.

Your story will be your script and should be no longer than 250 words and be typed, double-spaced (double-spacing makes it easier to follow your script when you are recording).

Need a story idea? How about:

- Why do you work in the field that you do?
- Why did you chose to \_\_\_\_\_ (go to college, to move, to join a certain cause)?

Remember, this is not a formal speech or presentation. Write a story that sounds natural when it is read out loud. **Imagine you are talking to a friend or someone else you care about.** Be creative and be yourself.

While you will not walk away from this workshop as an expert in video production, we hope that you will be able to continue to develop your skills to make future digital stories. We hope that through this experience participants will gain access to new forms of media to express their beliefs, their goals, and their perspectives.

## Be Prepared for the Workshop

Please bring the following to the first day of training a draft of your draft of your script and be prepared to discuss it and work together to fine-tune your story.

### *Draft of Your Story*

The key to a good digital story is the story itself. The final movie will be one to three minutes long and scripts should be 250 - 300 words. We will be reworking the scripts on the first day of the workshop so don't worry if your story is longer than 250 words. *This is your chance to choose a story that's important to you and can only be told by you.*



Pima "Man in the Maze". The labyrinth design depicts experiences and choices we make in our journey through life. In the middle of the "maze", a person finds their dreams and goals.



When you get images from the web, please make sure to get the largest size possible (no smaller than 720 pixels by 480 pixels.) Also, make sure you have permission to use all images taken from the web. That means writing down the URL and contacting the webmaster of the site if the work is not a copyright-free or public domain.

## Music

Compact discs and MP3's are the easiest to work with. Consider using local music, music related to your story, and music without lyrics. Please make sure that you have permission to use all music. Royalty free music is available at:

- <http://freemusicarchive.org/>
- [www.freeplaymusic.com](http://www.freeplaymusic.com) (you have to register to download – free)
- [www.soundclick.com](http://www.soundclick.com)
- <http://www.amazon.com/Free-Songs-Music/b?node=334897011>

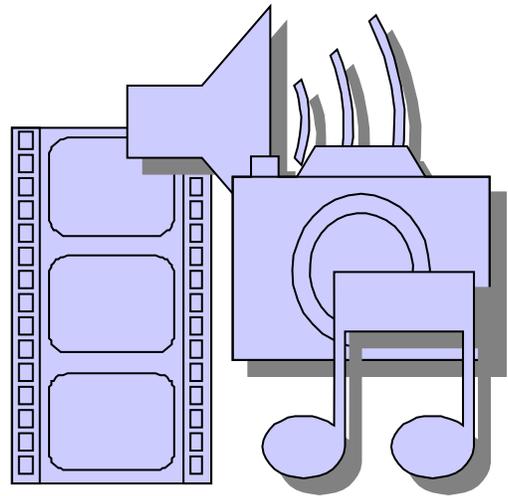
## Home video

Video takes up a lot of memory and there are many different formats, not all of which may work with VideoPad. Because there are so many variables, images are preferred and we will only use video in small clips (if it's used at all). If you're planning to use video, please contact us before the training and let us know so that we can make arrangements. You can also download video that corresponds to your story at [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org). Make sure you choose the highest quality download.

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*Copyright and Permission and Issues: Please remember that when choosing images and music for your digital story, avoid copyrighted materials. If you do use other people's work, you should include them in your final credits and get permission.*

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# Workshop Agenda

## *Workshop Goal*

Create a 2-3 minute digital story. The story will be a first-hand experience told in your words (a first-person story). You're not expected to become an expert in the software programs that are used but you will gain a basic understanding of them.

## *Step 1 – Plan & Prepare*

We'll view Digital Story movies and discuss the message, the tone, and the ways they are used. We'll also discuss audiences, venues, purposes, and presentation formats.

## *Step 2 - Write a Script (Your Story)*

Where do we begin? You will use the draft of your story to write your script. We will help fine tune our stories in the story circle and one-on-one.



## *Step 3 - Storytelling Circle*

The Story Circle is an important part of the script-building session – it is what makes digital storytelling, *Storytelling*. The Circle helps people shift to a thoughtful and deep listening dialogue. The whole group will convene in the Story Circle to share scripts and provide guided feedback; the group will act as an initial audience. This is also the beginning of envisioning the audiences you're trying to reach and the potential uses for your digital stories.

The Story Circle will have guidelines that are agreed to upon by the group and the facilitator will ensure the guidelines are followed. The Circle helps:

- Provide a safe environment.
- Guides group interaction.
- Keeps the conversations on track.
- Encourages participation and discussion with questions and open communication style.
- To seek understanding.
- To actively listen.

The length of the Circle can take from 1-3 hours and is dependent upon the stories and group interaction. Each person in the Circle will get 10 minutes to talk about their story and then allow time afterwards for feedback from the group.

Everyone participates in the Story Circle and provides feedback. Feedback is to be thoughtful and help the storyteller fine-tune their story. Sometimes when you hear another story you want to share yours instead of offering feedback, we ask that you save the sharing of your story when it is your turn and to only offer feedback to the storyteller who is sharing. Tips for offering feedback:

- Start your feedback with what you liked.
- If you have a suggestion about the story, start with “If this was my story, I might”.
- Feedback includes asking questions. If something was not clear to you, please ask your question about what was not clear to you. Please do not ask “why did you do that” or “why did that happen”. In the Story Circle we are listening and helping the storyteller with making their story clear; we’re not here to grill them or find out why something may have happened.
- Wait for the storyteller to finish their story before offering feedback.
- In the interest of time, if you agree with what someone else has said, you are asked to use “jazzy hands” to show that you are in agreement.

*When in the Storytelling Circle, please remain respectful to those who are speaking and be neutral and fair-minded.*

*When sharing feedback, please save sharing a story or your story until it's your turn.*

To help close the Circle, the facilitator may ask the storytellers to comment on what happened during the Circle. If the Circle was intense, someone may be asked if they would like to offer some words of inspiration or hold a few seconds of silence to formally end the Circle.

Depending on the time, we may also start recording the stories.

Note: The facilitators may take notes during the Circle; it helps them to remember when they are working one on one with you on your story.

#### ***Step 4 - Making it a Multimedia Experience***

We'll see examples and explore how multimedia adds to personal reflection and public expression, and how to use it purposefully. You will create storyboards from your scripts so you can identify which images, music/sounds you will need to create your story in VideoPad, a free video-editing software program.

### Step 5 - Storyboarding

Storyboarding is mapping out how your images will match up with your script and will save you time when putting your movie together. You can make it as complex as you want it or you can hand write on your script where you want the images to go with your words.

#### Storyboarding Example

Title will be: Computers Drive Me Crazy (*make move all over screen*)

Your Script (narration)	Images (handwriting on your script showing what image goes where with your narration is the simplest way to do a storyboard or lay out your pictures in the order to match your text)
Has the whole world gone mad?	Picture of lady at computer 
I think I'm going nuts!	Picture of pulling hair out 
I think, I think I'm gunna just screammmmmmm!	Picture of Screaming 

Credits:

I want to thank: \_\_\_\_\_

Images from: \_\_\_\_\_

Music from: \_\_\_\_\_

## Step 6 – Produce

We'll check in with the group and start recording narrations and finish image collection, and we'll start putting all the pieces together:

1. We'll share how to create and organize files for digital editing projects. We'll have a tutorial in basic image editing where you'll learn to resize, crop, adjust colors and contrast of your images.
2. Each storyteller will join a facilitator in a separate area to record your narration.
3. We'll share how to use a basic video editing program called VideoPad, to start putting your movie together. We'll discuss matching your images to your narration, Transitions, Special Effects, Text and Music.
4. Individual time to work on and finish editing in VideoPad.
5. Check-In: We'll briefly share our challenges and excitement.



Digital storytelling workshop in Anchorage, Alaska.

## Step 7 – Publish and Movie Premiere!

We will move right into individual time to work on and finish your movie in VideoPad. Facilitators will work one-on-one with the storytellers to:

1. Add music (final step!) and save your VideoPad project as a movie.
2. Publish your digital story and save it into different formats.
3. Movie Premiere and finally get to see one another's final digital stories! Celebrate!
4. Discuss how your digital stories will be used.
5. Debrief and Evaluation: We'll reflect on the previous three days, reviewing the process for each of the four phases.

## Additional Information

### *ORID Questions*

When we share our digital stories with communities, we use the ORID Dialogue Model to talk about the stories. ORID is a method you can use when you want to have people talk about an issue and understand it, and may help your community members' move towards doing something about it.

**O – Objective:** Fact-Finding (What do you think is the issue?)

- What did you see here? What scene sticks out for you?
- What do you hear? What do you think this storyteller is saying?
- What do you think is happening? What are the facts?

**R – Reflective:** Identifying with the Issue (How does this relate to me?)

- What intrigued/interested you most about the movie?
- How does it relate to our lives?
- How is your experience the same or different?

**I – Interpretive:** Understanding the Issue (Why does this happen?)

- What did you learn from this movie?
- What is the impact of alcohol upon our traditions?
- What are the values shown here? (traditions, family)
- How does this relate to your community/tribe/family?
- How do you or we face this issue?

**D – Decisional:** Call to Action (What can we do about it?)

- What will you do differently after seeing this movie?
- What will help us to act?
- What would be the next steps?
- How can we celebrate this story? (That our traditions, and ourselves can solve the problem! The answer is within us!)

Tips:

No yes/no questions or why questions as yes/no questions do encourage conversation and why questions can distract from the issue you're trying to address.

## ***Online Resources***

### **VideoPad Tutorial**

<http://www.nchsoftware.com/videopad/tutorial.html>

### **Writing a Movie Script**

<http://www.creative-writing-now.com/write-a-movie-script.html>

### **Storyboarding**

<http://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/page.cfm?id=23&cid=23&sublinkid=37>

### **Creating Photo Collages**

<http://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/page.cfm?id=23&cid=23&sublinkid=38>

### **Using Microsoft Picture Editor**

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/help/about-picture-manager-HP001001721.aspx>

### **Recording and Editing Digital Audio with Audacity – Free Audio Editing Program**

<http://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/page.cfm?id=23&cid=23&sublinkid=39>

### **Facebook Digital Storytelling Group**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/akstorytellers/>

### **Digital Storytelling Process**

<http://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/page.cfm?id=23&cid=23&sublinkid=97>